

My name is Dan Hazlett. I have been a performing and performingartist for over 30 years. I also spent seven years as a folk music DJ on a local public FM radio station.

I am currently releasing full length CDs number five and six simultaneously. I've received airplay on numerous public radio stations in the US as well as several other Nations. I've been featured on a Nationally syndicated radio show in the form of an hour-long interview and been presented on a Nationally syndicated show on commercial radio. I've appeared on a number of locally produced cable television music programs.

I tour nationally and perform a significant number of shows per year and have done so for the past nine years.

I have received airplay locally only from public radio stations. With the exception of one large FM station which boldly features local acoustic artists on one particular weekend morning show and a small AM staion, I've never received airply, to my knowledge, from any commercial station. The host of that FM show told me of an artist I know from Minnesota who I know to be a well-know Nationally touring artist who claims she is the only commercial station in the US to offer him airplay.

This falls in line with my personal experience and that of the hundreds of other musicians I know in the same boat.

With NPR embracing talk radio and moving away from locally produced shows and what they consider specialty shows, the possibility of airplay becomes even more diminished.

Beyond that, I'm even more concerned with the diminshing access to unfiltered information in this country caused by having so much of our media owned and operated by a few large entities.

The airwaves were meant to be owned and liscened as a public resource. When they are allowed to be dominated by a few powerful individual entities, as they currently have been through deregulation, the idea of a free press begins to lose it's focus.

This country can only remain as free as it's ability to have accurate and unbiased information freely disseminated exists.

I strongly urge the FCC to stop any new plans for deregulation and return to a smaller, community based format for all media. What we have now amounts to a Trust situation and we all know where that leads - power and corruption for a few while the country as a whole suffers.

We live in a time when bigger seems to be the way every organization believes they ought to be going. We recently lost several beloved and popular "specialty" programs for our largest public station because so called experts felt the station would be able to do better at fund raising time if they catered to a certain larger group. This leaves whole segments of their listening audience out in the cold. This kind of thinking serves to isolate our already shrinking pockets of cultural identity while attempting to homogonize what we hear, see and read on a daily basis. This country is built upon diversity and cannot continue to function as a free democracy for long if the very things that make us locally diverse are relegated to the trash bin in favor of funding.

When I think of local programming, I imagine media that embraces the varied and rich traditions in it's community by offering something for each of them. This allows for a cross-pollination of ideas and leads to greater acceptance and understanding of our differences. It's the ways in which we embrace our unique personal and cultural differences that make us a strong nation. Not trying to make everyone conform to one bland standard for the sake of a profit margin.

Local programming should not only include the idea of being locally produced, but should reflect a large variety of the interests of the various ethnic and cultural traditions of the community from which they originate. A few music shows with local hosts does not, in my opinion, add up to local programming.

The first emphasis should always be about meeting the needs of a diverse community.

We need all these things, news, public affairs, arts and music, entertainment, to originate as local programming. What grows out of one specific region of the country should be given a voice. If not, these valuable traditions will be lost like tears in the rain. If the community from which they spring does not embrace them, who will?

While getting involved in community events is a worthwhile service, it does not take the place of true diverse local programming and should not be equated with representing the local community on air.

Everyone knows that payola is alive and well. We all know that these independent promoters are just middle men for the big labels. The FCC ought step up to the plate and put an end to this scandalous behavior. Public stations are not permitted to do anything that would be perceived as having financial gain, but the commercial stations continue to find ways to break the rules.

What's more frightening to me is the idea that huge entertainment conglomerates can own both the media and the product. When the Corporation that owns a radio or tv outlet also owns a record label the public becomes a force fed captive to the products being presented. This kind of situation ought to be outlawed as it can not be viewed as a fair business practise.

Voice tracking is an insidious practice that effectively allows national corporations to control and direct everything that goes out over the air. How can any clear thinking person think this is possibly a good thing for a local community.

National playlists are a huge problem to localism. How can anyone not see how having the decision over what is played in the hands of a few corporate executives can never serve a local community with all it's diverse parts properly.

This problem could easily be reversed by a return to the kind of regulation that does not permit huge corporations to gobble up media in every market.

I think Low power stations are only a desperate cry for what we truly need which is a return to true localism throughout all media. However, if it's all that's standing between the community and the

homogonization of all media, it's better than nothing.

Interestingly enough, after the battle to restore LPFM, it was frightening to see how the effectiveness of the idea was stripped away. I know in our large metropolitan area no one who applied was actually allowed a liscense. How can this be?

The deregulation of media proposed and carried out by congress and the FCC has been a shameful chapter in the history of American broadcasting. If we survive this, it will be looked back upon as another dark chapter in our history, similar in nature to the McCarthy era.